

bitter controversy were so thoroughly taught, and the traditions of peace so firmly established, that tho the participants in the sad controversy have nearly all passed away, their children and children's children still stoutly maintain the right of the church to have peace within its borders, regardless of the whims and jealousies, harsh talk and trivial grievances, of sensitive members.

A Danger to Children

The Presbyterian.

A man, not a church-member, but a parent, lately remarked that he used to dance and play cards, but he did not intend to allow his children to do so, and then asked, "How can I train them to keep away from these evils when church members about them patronize them? This is a question that others, similarly situated, are asking. It used to be that these worldly amusements were largely discountenanced by those who claimed to be Christians, but now there is little or no distinction among church-members and worldlings in respect to them. Alas! that is so. Religion suffers in consequence. Many persons are injured by the dance and card table in body, purse, character, principle and life, while those who profess the Christian religion and engage in them prove stumbling-blocks to those who, from past experience, see harm in them, and who want to guard their children from damage thru them. Here is ground for thought and prayer on the part of all who desire to live so as to do the most good and the least injury in society.

Our Young People

RELIGIOUS BARRENESS

Topic for March 3—Scripture Lesson, Luke 18 : 6-9

The many attempts made to press a literal interpretation upon the details of this allegory have resulted not only in creating confusion as to its real signification, but even in destroying very largely the beauty of the allegory. It seems to us that in using this allegory Christ intended to teach the lesson, that fruitfulness is the test of Christian character. Here, as everywhere else, both in the Old Testament and the New the people of God are likened to a tree in a vineyard (Isa 5 : 1-7). This points to an individual in a favored community, enjoying means of grace and spiritual culture. The reference is primarily to the Jew planted in the midst of the chosen people of God, with every condition favorable to fruit bearing supplied, yet bearing no fruit. In the second place it refers to the individual of the present, who, living in a Christian age and in a nation that lends its favor to Christianity, and enjoying all Christian advantages, yet having no fruit, neither in character nor in life, to the glory of God. It teaches also the long suffering and mercy of God toward the world, as well as the certainty of destruction in the end.

There is danger that we make the mistake of the ancient Jew. He had come to believe that religion was a thing of external services, fasts, feasts, ceremonies, genuflections and sacrifices. As a consequence the Jew had obscured the very meaning of spiritual service by confounding it with fringes and phylacteries. It was then that that the Lord said thru Isaiah, "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; your appointed feasts my soul hateth." Samuel also asks, "Hath the Lord

as great delight in sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold obedience is better than sacrifice, and to harken than the fat of rams." And finally Micah speaks, in words that sum up much of the Bible teaching on this point, Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the most high God? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil? Hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God. This also is the teaching of the New Testament and was insisted upon again and again by Christ himself, St. Paul, St. John and St. James.

This then is the truth, that religion can not be dis severed from morality, that the object and test of all religion, is morality, that character is of infinitely more import than profession or creed and that "conduct is nine tenths of life." Religion is not external observance, not voluntary humiliation, not a well arranged creed, even if it be hoary with age. Religion is that which is back of and behind all these. Let us hasten to say the word, *Religion is life*. Theology is only its intellectual form; external observances is its changing vestments, and ritualism, as another says, "Is its superfluous and often childish fringe." Another has defined religion in this way: "Superstition is fear before God, fanaticism hatred before God, religion love before God." Does not this accord with Jesus' own teaching? Recall His reply to the young man who asked Him what he should do to inherit eternal life: Love God with all thy heart and love thy neighbor as thy self. Here is the gist of the lesson. Let us take it home to ourselves. Let us not longer deceive ourselves. God can see thru shams. He will not, in the least, respect us for our profession or observances. Our profession must end in fruit for God and man. A real Christian should be exemplary. His character ought to become with the years lovely and lovable. The world shall see in the Christian a purer standard of life and a more generous sympathy than it has to offer. We are to be and should strive more and more to become so, "The Light of the World," and "The Salt of the Earth."

And let us know finally that by our works we shall stand or fall. Let us then seek to become fruit-bearing Christians. Let the Christian fruits of Gal. 5 : 22, 23 characterize our lives. Let us not enjoy Christian privileges and associations in vain. Let our lives tell mightily for God and our fellow-men, then at the end we shall hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord."

SCRIPTURE LIGHT

1. Christ an example of good works, John 10 : 32 ; Acts. 10 : 38.
- 2 Good works known as :
 - 1 Good fruits, Jas. 3 : 17.
 - 2 Fruits for repentance, Matt. 3 : 8.
 - 3 Fruits of righteousness, Phil. 1 : 11.
 - 4 Works and labors of love, Heb. 6 : 10.
- 3 Necessary conditions of :
 - 1 Thru indwelling of Christ, Phil. 1 : 11.
 - 2 Thru abiding in Christ, John 15 : 4, 5.
 - 3 Cooperation of God, Isa. 26 : 12 ; Phil. 2 : 13.
- 4 The scriptures ought lead us to, II Tim. 3 : 16, 17 ; Jas. 1 : 25
- 5 Must be performed in Christ's name, Col. 3 : 17.
- 6 Things unattainable by good works :
 - 1 Justification, Rom 3 : 20 ; Gal. 2 : 16.
 - 2 Salvation, Eph 2 : 8, 9 ; II Tim. 1 : 9 ; Titus 3 : 5.
- 6 Results of good works.
 - 1 God glorified, John 15 : 8.
 - 2 Others led to God, Matt. 5 : 16 ; I Pet. 2 : 12.
 - 3 A blessing follows, Jas 1 : 25.
- 8 The Christian and good works :
 - 1 Exhorted to put on Col 3 : 12-14.
 - 2 Should be rign in I Tim. 6 : 18
 - 3 Should be fruitful in Col 1 : 10.
 - 4 Are created unto Eph. 2 : 10.

- 5 Should provoke each other, Heb. 10 : 24.
- 6 Should bring to the light, John 3 : 21
- 7 Follow into their rest, Rev. 14 : 13.
- 8 In judgment will be an evidence of faith, Matt. 25 : 34 40 ; Jas. 2 : 14-20.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION.

- 1 What was God's purpose in the creation of the world and man?
- 2 What is the supreme end of human life?
- 3 How can man best attain unto the purpose of his creation?
- 4 What is the meaning of verse 6 in the evening's lesson?
- 5 Is anything "our own"? What relation do we sustain to what we have and what responsibility does this relationship involve?
- 6 Explain verse 7. Compare it with Matt. 12 : 30.
- 7 Can a Christian be merely *useless*?
- 8 What does the barren Christian lose in this present world?
- 9 What is the end of the barren Christian?
- 10 What is the relation between fruit bearing and judgment?
- 11 Name some necessary conditions of fruit-bearing?
- 12 Enumerate some Christian fruits, Gal. 5 : 22, 23 ; Matt. 5 : 13-16.

WM. D. FURRY,

Sisters' S. C. E.

Treasurer's Report of the S. S. C. E., for the Month of November

THEOLOGICAL FUND

Reported,			\$ 55 50
Louisville, Ohio,	S S. C. E.,		2 50
Rittman, "	"		2 50
Hudson, Iowa,	"		1 20
Lanark, Ill.,	"		1 50
Summit Mills, Pa.,	"		83
Flora, Ind.,	"		1 40
Corinth, "	"		1 90
Milford, "	"		2 00
Maple Grove, "	"		65
Interest per L. S. Bauman,			20
Laura Greer, on pledge,			1 00
Winnie Lawrence, "			1 00
Maud Wingard, "			1 00
Mrs J. A. Riley, "			1 00
Alice E. Augustine, "			1 00
Total,			\$ 75 18

HOME MISSIONS

Reported,			\$ 135 80
Hudson, Iowa,	S S. C. E.,		1 50
Godfrey, Kan.,	"		2 80
Pony Creek, "	"		80
Summit Mills, Pa.,	"		83
Adrian, Mo.,	"		1 30
Total,			\$ 143 03
Paid to Treasurer of N. M. B.			10 00
Balance,			\$ 133 03

FOREIGN MISSIONS

Reported,			\$ 26 55
Rittman, Ohio,	S. S. C. E.,		75
Maple Grove, Ind.,	"		65
Emma Wingard, on pledge,			1 00
Total,			\$ 28 95

SUPERANNUATED MINISTERS' FUND

Reported,			\$ 92 78
Rittman, Ohio,	S S. C. E.,		1 25
Flora, Ind.,	"		1 00
Pony Creek, Kan.,	"		80
Summit Mills, Pa.,	"		83
Millersburg, Iowa,	"		3 80